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STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
Department of Genetics

Dr. Otto F. Thaler  
Department of Psychiatry  
University of Rochester Medical School  
Rochester, New York 14620

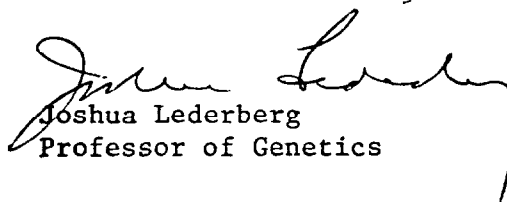
Dear Dr. Thaler,

I was quite delighted and relieved to see your letter to Saturday Review, Sciences, about the Rosenhan studies. I was quite outraged that Science should have accepted such an article under the guise of clinical scientific reporting rather than of polemical editorializing.

I am particularly distressed that Science should have published the article in the first instance without the critical comment that it was a very poor example indeed of clinical investigation. Imagine how an article would have fared if it had dealt with the validation of a new drug treatment and based its conclusions on evidence of the kind that was presented in this article! I would certainly encourage you to communicate to the editor of Science in the same terms as your comment here. It would be particularly important to have this come from someone with credentials within the profession, but I am also indicating my own reactions to the matter by a copy of this letter to Dr. Abelson.

The fact that some of Dr. Rosenhan's allegations about what used to be called snake pits are believed a priori to have some merit, may well have blurred the scientific judgment of many colleagues who would otherwise have been equally quick to comment on the methodological problems of Rosenhan's report.

Sincerely yours,

  
Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

✓ JL/rr  
cc: Dr. Philip Abelson

THALER, OTTO